


# STEP

## Standardized Test of English Proficiency

## A Guide for Students

The National Center for Assessment in Higher Education,
Department of Language Testing





# Introduction

The National Center for Assessment in Higher Education (NCA) publishes materials introducing and explaining the various tests the Center produces. Often the publications include:

- a brief pamphlet directed to educators and administrators explaining the approach of a particular test, how it was developed, some suggestions as to how the test could be useful and providing some statistical information regarding validity, reliability, etc.

- a booklet intended to briefly familiarize those who are planning to take the test, giving some examples of the domains covered, the types of questions used and familiarizing the future test-taker with the general format and lay-out of the test.

A third and more ambitious publication accompanying the NCA tests may include an in-depth survey of the types of questions the test-taker will find as well as a guide to reviewing the type of material that may be presented on the test. The Center presents STEP, A Guide for Students to fill that role. Although necessarily brief compared to the voluminous material regarding the English language, it still attempts to systematically cover the major elements of the English language that are most likely to play a role in a STEP test. In conjunction with the test-takers prior study and use of English, we hope it can serve as a useful review and renewal of not only the points examined in the test but also to an invigorated motivation and delight in the very process of learning.

In order to give the test-taker a real 'feel' for the STEP test, the Study Guide presents two model tests that are based on the actual formatting and presentation of a real STEP test, even utilizing the same general wording for the instructions. An answer key is provided at the end of each of the model tests.

NCA offers this Study Guide with the hope that it will enable test-takers to be comfortable and confident in approaching STEP and lessen test anxiety that sometimes plays a negative role in the taking of standardized tests.

The Center wishes to express gratitude to the many people who have contributed to the production

of this Study Guide. Their time, their energy and their expertise have undoubtedly improved the usefulness and quality of this offering. To enumerate some of those who have contributed, we must mention the item writers and item reviewers; those who read and revised and then re-read the versions that have resulted in this publication – both individual reviewers and those sitting in review committees; the Graphics Department of the Center whose sharp eyes and expertise drew attention to points that otherwise would have been overlooked; to outside consultants who were called upon to read, review and offer suggestions for revisions during the various stages of this publication.

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# Part I : The Four Components of STEP

## Background

Based on growing international needs for the English language, several academic and non-academic institutions have approached the National Center for Assessment in Higher Education (Qiyas) calling for the development of an English test that could test the proficiency of their applicants. Consequently the Center formed a Committee consisting of specialists in the fields of English and psychological measurement. The Committee looked first into available international, regional and local test experiences and practices. It also visited and consulted institutions specialized in standardized language testing. After an elaborate survey the Committee reached a conclusion on the need and formation of the test.

## What is STEP?

STEP is an acronym for Standardized Test of English Proficiency. It is designed in an objective and unbiased manner to test a person's level of proficiency in the use of English. The test is made up of the following four components:

1. Reading Comprehension (RC – 40%),
2. Structure (ST – 30%),
3. Listening Comprehension (LC – 20%),
4. Compositional Analysis (CA – 10%).

The Committee chose these four components and their respective weights after consultation and research into the approach of both regional and international bodies responsible for the production of similar English tests and feedback provided by national organizations requesting such a test. These values may be altered at a later date depending on statistical analysis. It should be added that STEP is uniquely designed by English language professors and experts native to the region and therefore knowledgeable of the abilities and the needs locally. This drastically lowers the possibility of cultural and social bias and provides a more appropriate tool for objective assessment.

## Goals

The test shall be used to fulfill the following specific goals:

- Academic admission to the English Departments at Universities or Colleges.
- Academic exemption from certain courses.
- Issuing reports of general English proficiency for applicants.

## Who should take the test?

- Students entering college.
- Students seeking a course waiver.
- Students entering a graduate studies program.
- Teachers pursuing certification.
- Individuals pursuing employment in the private sector.

## Test Formation

The actual STEP test has 100 questions distributed among the four components previously mentioned. With additional time allotted for non-scorable trial questions and instructions, the total test time is 3 hours.

## Some General Advice

Although there is a tendency for students to 'cram' for a test, this is not advisable. In fact, some students are tempted to stay up 'studying' to the point of losing sleep and perhaps not paying attention to eating properly. Begin your preparation for taking any test well ahead of time. Spend a previously allotted amount of time on focused and active study. Take breaks to renew your energy and concentration. Time set aside for an appropriate amount of sleep and nutritious meals should be seen as part of your preparation.

# Part I : The Four Components of STEP

## Part 1: Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension comprises 40% of the items on a STEP test. After a medium length reading passage or in some cases a short reading passage (sometimes only one sentence), the test-taker is asked to respond to multiple choice questions that involve several reading skills in relation to the reading passage:

1. Word Meaning.
2. Reading to Perform a Task.
3. Demonstrating General Understanding.
4. Developing an Interpretation.
5. Examining Content.

### 1. Word Meaning

The test-taker has to select the choice closest in meaning to the word as it is in its context. In other words, a word can have several meanings, but the target meaning is the one that harmonizes with the context. The word **star**, for example, can have several different meanings depending on context. We might have a reading about a three-star general; the reading may be about a star student or it may be about a star in a movie. Idiomatically, it may be used to describe the experience immediately following a heavy blow to the head, as in 'seeing stars.' Each one of those usages of **star** has a different meaning. However, if the passage is clearly about the sky, then the word star will not mean any of those things. Rather, it will refer to the bright objects we can see in the sky at night.

Look at the following example of a word meaning question:

Example: A **fake** friend and a shadow attend only while the sun shines.

The word **fake** in the above saying is closest in meaning to:

A. counterfeit B. authentic
C. similar D. duplicate

For this question, the meaning of the sentence paints a picture that provides a clue to the meaning of the word. When the sun is shining (when the weather is good), I have a shadow. When the sun is gone behind some clouds or it is raining, I do not have a shadow. A fake friend is one who is with me when things are going well – like when the sun is shining. As soon as things are not going well, such a friend is no longer with me – like when my shadow disappears as soon as the sun is behind clouds. In other words, he or she is not a true friend, but a false or fake friend. Choice (A) is therefore the closest in meaning.

## 2. Reading to Perform a Task.

First use skimming and scanning techniques to search for information in the reading passage or material given. Confirm answers then by reading the passage thoroughly. Charts, schedules, directions, recipes, forms, maps, or graphs may at times be the type of reading from which information must be gathered. Some questions of this nature may ask students to reach logical conclusions or inferences based on information given.

Example questions on the **Table of Contents** (*see following page*):

1. Which chapter in this book is the longest?

   A. Chapter 2 B. Chapter 3

   C. Chapter 5 D. Chapter 7

2. Where can I find the Index and Glossary in this book?

   A. After the Study Guide. B. Before 'Current Studies'.

   C. In the 7th chapter. D. At the end of the book.

3. Which chapter most likely includes information on Arabic language structure?

   A. Chapter 4 B. Chapter 5

   C. Chapter 6 D. Chapter 7

4. Where would you expect to find examples contrasting two different languages, showing similarities and dissimilarities?

   A. Chapter 1 B. Chapter 2

   C. Chapter 4 D. Chapter 6

5. In what chapter would you expect to find a discussion on meaning?

   A. Chapter 2 B. Chapter 3

   C. Chapter 5 D. Chapter 6

6. What subject does this book deal with?

   A. General Lingusitics B. Psycholinguistics

   C. Sociolinguistics D. Neurolinguistics

( answer key at bottom of next page )

## Fundamental Studies in Linguistics

Roger Cartinion, Susan Mulligan

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answer key

| 1. C | 2.D | 3. B | 4.C | 5. D | 6. A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

## 3. Demonstrating General Understanding.

Some ways that test-takers may be asked to show a general understanding of a passage may include:

1. Responding to questions that relate to statements in the passage.
2. Identifying the topic of a passage or a paragraph in the passage.
3. Recalling the correct sequence of events or cause and effect relationships.
4. Identifying important details given in the passage and perhaps indicate similarities and/or differences.
5. Indicating the words or concepts that a referent refers to.

## 4. Developing an Interpretation.

To develop an interpretation, the test-taker must look beyond what is explicitly stated in a passage and show a more complete understanding of what was read. Questions of this nature would include:

1. Identifying implicit cause and effect relationships.
2. Predicting probable future outcomes or actions.
3. Drawing conclusions based on specific facts and/or events in the passage.

## 5. Examining Content

Examining content and structure requires students to **critically analyze and evaluate** the passage. Such questions require the students to consider the passage objectively, and evaluate its quality and effectiveness. Test-takers may be asked to:

1. Draw conclusions about the motivation or purpose for writing a passage;
2. Identify whether portions of the passage are facts or opinions

Examples of points 3, 4, and 5 will be seen in the questions to the following reading passage.

## 6. Some Practical Advice

A few very practical things to notice that will always be found on the STEP test for a reading passage:

A. The lines in the passage itself are not numbered. Rather than numbering the lines, the paragraphs themselves are numbered.
B. The format uses a two-line break to indicate a new paragraph rather than indentation.
C. Some words or phrases in the passage may be in **bold** letters. When you read the passage and come across such **bolded** words, you can be sure that there will be a question directly relating to them. Most likely it will be a word meaning question.
D. As a general rule, reading passages are not given a title on the STEP test. Sometimes, though not always, you may be asked to select what you think is the best title for a passage.
E. Questions follow the paragraphs of a passage in sequence.
F. Questions that ask for a title or the general meaning of a passage are always the last questions about that passage.

As you turn your attention to a reading passage, one approach or method that may work well for you is to use the questions that follow the passage as a guide for an initial scanning of the passage. As mentioned above, the questions are arranged so that they follow the material in the passage. The first question will most likely deal in some way with the first paragraph. Of course, in some cases there may not be a question regarding the material in the first paragraph – the first question may be about something in the second paragraph. In any case, the questions track through the material in the passage sequentially. By scanning along through the passage using the questions as a guide you may be able to find some of the answers in a time-saving manner. If you follow this suggestion, you will come across some questions that you may not be able to answer simply by skimming or scanning the passage. Skip such questions and save them for a more careful reading of the passage. Don't forget to go back and make sure you have answered all the questions.

The last questions for a particular reading passage will be the questions that may call upon you to identify the general topic of the whole reading, choose a title or select what you think is the main idea of the passage. Such questions, of course, require a grasp of the meaning of the passage taken as a whole. After your initial scanning and then going back to re-read the passage for the answers not easily found quickly, you will have become familiar with the passage. Still, you may well find that you will need to read through the passage again before choosing the best answer for such a question.

## 7. Sample Reading Passage and Questions

### Passage

1) How many things can you see in the night sky? A lot! On a clear night you might see the moon, some planets, and thousands of sparkling stars. You can see even more with a telescope. You might see stars where before you only saw dark space. You might see that many stars look larger than others. You might see that some stars that look white are really red or blue. With bigger and bigger telescopes you can see more and more objects in the sky. And you can see those objects in more and more detail.

2) But scientists believe there are some things in the sky that we will never see. We won't see them with the biggest telescope in the world, on the clearest night of the year. That's because they're invisible. They're the mysterious dead stars called black holes.

3) You might find it hard to imagine that stars die. After all, our Sun is a star. Year after year we see it up in the sky, burning brightly, giving us heat and light. The Sun certainly doesn't seem to be getting old or weak. But stars do burn out and die after billions of years.

4) As the gases of a star burn, they give off light and heat. But when the gas runs out, the star stops burning and begins to die. As the star cools, the outer layers of the star pull in toward the center. The star squashes into a smaller and smaller ball. If the star was very small to begin with, the star ends up as a cold, dark ball called a black dwarf. If the star was very big, it keeps **squashing** inward until it's packed together tighter than anything in the universe.

5) Imagine if the Earth were crushed until it was the size of a tiny **marble**. That's how tightly this dead star, a black hole, is packed. What pulls the star in toward its center with such power? It's the same force that pulls you down when you jump — the force called gravity. A black hole is so tightly packed that its gravity sucks in everything — even light. The light from a black hole can never come back to your eyes. That's why you see nothing but blackness.

6) So the next time you stare up at the night sky, remember: there's more in the sky than meets the eye! Scattered in the silent darkness are black holes — the great mystery of space.

## Questions

1. What can bigger telescopes see?

A. Hidden planets. B. Dark spaces.

C. Larger sparkles. D. Other bodies.

Answer 1: It is not possible to see hidden planets, even with a telescope, so (A) is not correct. Dark spaces remain dark spaces even if they are seen through a telescope, so (B) is not correct. Stars sparkle, but it isn't exactly accurate to say that we can see larger sparkles with the help of a telescope, so (C) is not correct. That leaves us with (D) as the correct choice. Paragraph (1) says that with a telescope we can see more and more objects. Objects are bodies in the sky.

2. According to paragraph (2), which of the following is NOT true about black holes?

A. They are mysterious. B. They are invisible.

C. They are dead. D. They are big.

Answer 2: Only one of the 4 possible choices is NOT mentioned in the passage. By the process of elimination as we scan the paragraph, we can conclude that only (D) is not mentioned, so it is the correct answer.

3. What does paragraph (3) say about our Sun?

A. It is not a star. B. It is almost dead.

C. It gives light but not heat. D. It will burn out and die.

Answer 3: Paragraph (3) states that our Sun is in fact a star that gives us light and heat, so choices (A) and (C) are not correct. Our sun will, like all stars, eventually burn out and die – but this will not happen for a long long long time. Since that is true, choice (D) is correct and choice (B) is not correct.

4. The word **squashing** in paragraph (4) is closest in meaning to which of the following?

A. hitting B. shrinking

C. rotating D. breaking

Answer 4: From the immediate context of the word (which appears as squashing and also squashes in this paragraph), we are led to (B) as the correct answer. It is stated in this paragraph that 'the outer layers of the star pull in toward the center' and 'the star squashes into a smaller and smaller ball' which is shrinking.

5. According to paragraph (4), why does a star gives off light and heat?

   A. Because it reflects light.

   B. Because it burns its own fuel.

   C. Because of its mirror-like surface.

   D. Because of the high temperature of space.

Answer 5: Moons and planets reflect light, not stars; choice (A) is not correct. Probably (B) is the correct answer, but we should see if (C) or (D) may be more accurate. Choice (C) doesn't make sense because a mirror-like surface would be useful for reflecting light and choice (D), the temperature of space, isn't mentioned anywhere in the passage. Choice (B), as we suspected, is the correct answer. The paragraph states that light and heat from a star are the result of the burning of its gases. Gases are therefore the 'fuel' of the star which generate light and heat.

6. According to paragraph (4), what causes a star to die?

   A. Its fuel is depleted.

   B. It collides with other stars.

   C. It explodes outward.

   D. It ages too much.

Answer 6: According to paragraph (4), when a stars gases are gone, it stops burning and dies. Choice (A) is therefore the correct answer. It does not become a black hole because of colliding with other stars (B) or because of exploding (C). It dies simply because there is no fuel left. There is no particular age for it to become too old as in choice (D).

7. The word **marble** in paragraph (5) is closest in meaning to:

   A. a small vehicle.

   B. a tiny insect.

   C. a small building.

   D. a polished rock.

Answer 7: This question asks us to show that we understand what a marble is. If we are uncertain, we may move in the direction of thinking that size (tiny, small) has to be part of defining what it is. If we think like that, we may well go for (A), (B), or (C). However a marble is not a vehicle, an insect or a building. From paragraph (4) we get the strongest clue for the meaning of marble when it is said that 'The star squashes into a smaller and smaller **ball**'. A ball is not a vehicle, an insect, or a small building. By process of elimination, the correct answer is (D).

8. Why are black holes invisible according to paragraph (5)?

A. They do no allow light to escape.
B. They are very tightly packed.
C. They are too full of gravity.
D. They are extremely powerful.

Answer 8: According to paragraph (5), black holes are very tightly packed, as in choice (B) and therefore have an extremely forceful gravity. It is not correct to say that they are 'full' of gravity as in choice (C). Choice (D) is to an extent true; black holes are very powerful. Perhaps better to say the force of gravity is very powerful. In fact, so powerful that everything, including light, is sucked in. Thus choice (A) is the correct answer. Light cannot escape because of the strong force of gravity and without light, we cannot see them.

9. What is the best title for this passage?

A. Black Holes: Energy and Age
B. Black Holes: Gravity and Size
C. Black Holes: Reality and Mystery
D. Black Holes: Stars and Telescopes

Answer 9: By the process of elimination, the best title is choice (C). Part of each of the choices seems at first to be tempting for a title: energy, gravity, telescopes are all talked about in the paragraph. But the reality and mystery of black holes best fits the overall tone of the passage.

## Part 2: Structure

This component makes up 30% of the STEP test. It calls on the test-taker to choose the correct response on the grounds of correct grammar. An incorrect choice may seem possible, but will result in a construction or meaning that is not appropriate. The grammar points under consideration may be:

- verb tense (including irregular verb forms, the conditional, passive/active voice, reported speech, and modals).
- subject/verb agreement.
- correct use of adjectives, adverbs, definite/indefinite articles, prepositions, clauses/phrases, gerunds/infinitives, count and non-count nouns.

In other words, the test-taker may be asked to decide a response according to a wide range of grammar points.

Clues that may help you decide which word or words to choose may be:

- Grammatical relationships consistent with the grammar found in the sentence.
- Logical relationships may provide a clue to help determine the correct answer.
- If a question has two blanks, make certain that the answer you choose fits both blanks. Sometimes the answer for one of the blanks may be correct, but the answer offered for the other blank is not.
- Logic also must be considered for the word or words that complete a sentence with two blanks.
- Some questions may seem to have two answers that are both correct. Give careful consideration in such cases to shades of meaning that indicate which one is the best choice and therefore the correct answer

## Structure Examples:

Look at the following examples:

1. Kamal is _______ one of his four brothers.

   A. tallest　　B. taller

   C. the tallest　　D. the taller

Answer 1: The superlative, choice (C), is the only possibility for this blank. Choice (A) does not have the necessary article. Choices (B) and (D) are both wrong.

2. Khalid: Would you like coffee or tea?

   Yusuf: _______.

   A. No, with a little sugar　　B. Yes, tea please

   C. Just a little, thank you　　D. No, I'll have coffee.

Answer 2: This is a short dialogue in which Khalid offers Yusuf something to drink -- coffee or tea. He expects Yusuf to choose between the two or say that he doesn't want either one. Choice (B) is the only correct possibility – Yusuf accepts the offer of something to drink and chooses only one of the two drinks offered. Choices (A) and (C) aren't logical.

3. ________ three Khalids in my English class last year.

A. There had been
B. There have been
C. There were
D. There was

Answer 3: This sentence uses the there is/there are format: the subject of the sentence is actually 'three Khalids'. Since the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural. The words 'last year' at the end of the sentence mean that we must use the simple past to indicate a situation that is over and done with. Only choice (C) can be correct. Choice (A) is not correct since 'had been' is used in a situation where two events happen in the past, one before the other. Choice (B) is wrong because it uses the present perfect, indicating an activity that may yet be repeated. Choice (D) is wrong because there is no subject/verb agreement.

4. Miriam bought ________ an antique necklace.

A. for her sister
B. to her sister's
C. her sister
D. her sister's

Answer 4: The correct choice is (C). Both (B) and (D) are clearly wrong. If the indefinite article 'an' were not present in the sentence [an antique necklace], choice (D) would be possible grammatically. Choice (A) is wrong because of word order: it would be correct if placed at the end of the sentence.

5. ________ always crowded at the mall on the weekend.

A. He's
B. They're
C. It's
D. We're

Answer 5: Only choice (C) is correct. The impersonal 'it' is necessary.

## Part 3: Compositional Analysis

These questions make up 10% of the Standardized Test of English Proficiency (STEP). They require the test-taker to choose the best written form within the context presented in that question. The best response may depend upon capitalization, punctuation, the use of correct word order at the sentence level, the correct placement of information depending on the organization of a paragraph or, as you will see in the examples below, questions that ask the test-taker to identify a structure or wording that is INCORRECT.

The use of signal words like *but, and, or, however, since, because, until, as a result, on the other hand, never, usually, sometimes* and *always* give valuable clues that can lead to the best logical choice for the particular context of an item. Such words establish either contrasting information or similar information or may indicate a sequential relationship dependent on time order or cause-and-effect relationship. Determining the kind of relationship will enable the test-taker to know which of the choices offered best fits that relationship.

Look at these examples:

1. Which of the following sentences has the correct word order?
   - A. Actually the Japanese nor the Chinese neither, unless they have lived in the West for a while, care for cheese sandwiches.
   - B. Unless in the West they have lived for a while, neither the Japanese nor the Chinese care actually for cheese sandwiches.
   - C. Neither the Chinese care for cheese sandwiches actually nor the Japanese unless they have lived in the West for a while.
   - D. Neither the Chinese nor the Japanese actually care for cheese sandwiches unless they have lived in the West for a while.

Answer 1: The best choice is (D). All other choices offer a word order that is foreign to English usage. The entire focus of this question is on word order.

2. In which of the following sentences is all punctuation correct?

   A. After he took the exam, he checked his notes to see if he had answered the hardest questions correctly. He's pretty confident that he did well, although he's uncertain about the geography questions on Africa.

   B. After, he took the exam he checked his notes to see if he had answered the hardest questions correctly: he's pretty confident that he did well although he's uncertain about the geography questions on Africa.

   C. After he took the exam he checked his notes, to see if he had answered the hardest questions correctly; he's pretty confident that he did well, although he's uncertain about the geography questions on Africa.

   D. After he took the exam, he checked his notes to see if he had answered the hardest questions correctly. He's pretty confident that he did well although, he's uncertain about the geography questions on Africa.

Answer 2: Unlike the question before, the entire focus here is on punctuation. The correct choice is (A).
The following two items require the test-taker to choose the underlined word or phrase that is INCORRECT. There is no need to make the correction. With such questions, you need to recognize the ONE choice that is NOT grammatical. When items like this appear in the actual test, the test-taker will see the following instruction box:

> **Instructions**
>
> Identify the incorrect underlined word or words and mark your response on your answer sheet.

3. <u>Several</u> students <u>were confused</u> about the new assignment until they <u>meet</u> with the teacher after class. Now they <u>seem</u> to understand.

   A. Several | B. were confused
   C. meet | D. seem

Answer 3: The best approach for finding the *incorrect* word or words in questions like this is to read the sentence to the end and take note of each of the underlined choices as they appear. In following this procedure, you will discover that choice (C) is the one that is *incorrect*. The problem is tense: *meet* should be in the simple past to be consistent with the verb *were*. Choices (A), (B), and (D) are all grammatically correct. Make sure you read the last choice. It is always important to look at all the choices to be certain that you have found the ONE that is *incorrect*.

4. The teacher instructed the students to be at time for class tomorrow or else stay late.

A. instructed

B. to be

C. at time

D. stay

Answer 4: Using the same strategy as the previous question, we see that choice (C) is incorrect. The correct idiomatic expression is *on time*. In case of uncertainty, the only possible question might be whether or not choice (D) should use the full infinitive form. However, it is a parallel construction with *to be* in which case the word **to** can be dropped.

5. Which of the choices below will allow the following 2 sentences to be combined into 1 sentence only?

**He withdrew from mathematics and switched to medicine.**

**His focus changed**.

A. so that

B. because

C. then

D. after that

Answer 5: Only choice (B) is correct. It shows a cause/effect relationship: the second sentence is the cause and the first sentence is the effect. Choice (A) would turn the cause/effect relationship upside down. Both choices (C) and (D) indicate a time relationship which is not workable in combining these two sentences.

6. Muhammad: Have you seen my flash disk? I think I left it here yesterday.

Jarallah: Is that the one ________ last week?

A. who you bought

B. which you bought

C. that you bought it

D. which you bought it

Answer 6: The correct choice is (B) because it uses the relative pronoun *which* without the incorrect use of the pronoun *it*. Choice (C) would also be correct if the pronoun *it* were not included since *that* is interchangeable with *which* for objects.

## Part 4: Listening Comprehension

In the Listening Comprehension section, you will hear dialogues followed by questions that relate to the dialogues. Some dialogues are shorter than others. Here you see that the first dialogue is short and has only 2 questions whereas the second dialogue is considerably longer and has 9 questions. The questions that relate to each dialogue follow immediately after you have heard that dialogue. Each dialogue will be referred to on your answer sheet as a recording number. Thus the (2) questions that refer to the first dialogue will appear under Recording Number 1 and the (9) questions that refer to the second dialogue will appear on the answer sheet under Recording Number 2.

You may want to make notes as you listen to the dialogues to help you remember a point of information or some detail, but don't take so many notes that you lose your focus in the actual task of listening. Your notes are for your own understanding, so there is no need to try to write in complete sentences or to pay attention to grammar, spelling or neatness.

*IMPORTANT:*

***You will hear each dialogue one time only.***
***You will hear each question one time only.***
***Mark your responses as you go; don't leave anything unmarked***.

When you are taking the actual STEP test, you will ***NOT*** see the printed dialogue ***OR*** the questions. You will only see the possible answers: A, B, C, D.

After each question, some time is given for you to make your response. You cannot review or return to the questions of a previous dialogue, so respond to all the questions relating to a dialogue in the time allowed. Do not leave questions unanswered before moving on; unanswered questions will be marked as wrong.

You can listen to the dialogues and questions in this section on the CD with this book or by going to the recording available on the Qiyas website ( www.qiyas.org ).

## FIRST DIALOGUE

Recording Number 1

Yusuf: Wow, Sultan, you look wasted! Are you sick or something?

Sultan: No. I'm OK, just tired is all. I've been burning the midnight oil for a week now to get myself ready for finals.

1. What does Yusuf mean when he tells Sultan that he 'looks wasted'?

   A. That Sultan isn't using his time well.

   B. That Sultan isn't using his money well.

   C. The speaker is surprised at Sultan's appearance.

   D. The speaker wants to give Sultan some medical advice.

Answer 1: Even if we don't really understand what Yusuf means, we can easily guess by the question he asks immediately afterwards: *Are you sick or something?* With this very strong clue, we know that Yusuf doesn't mean anything about time or money as in (A) and (B). Neither does Yusuf want to give Sultan some medical advice as in (D). The correct answer is (C), he is surprised at how Sultan looks..

2. What does Sultan mean when he says, **I've been burning the midnight oil**?

   A. He has been sleeping a lot.

   B. He doesn't have electricity in his room.

   C. He is low on oil and needs a lot more.

   D. He has been studying all night long.

Answer 2: Yusuf uses this phrase to explain to Sultan why he looks the way he does. As he says, he has been studying for his final exams, so (A) is not correct. Both (B) and (C) have nothing to do with the meaning of 'burning the midnight oil'. It is an idiomatic expression that Yusuf uses to explain that he has been studying all night. He looks bad because he hasn't had any sleep: (D) is the correct choice.

## SECOND DIALOGUE

Recording Number 2

Agent: When was the last time we serviced your car?

Car owner: Well, I'm not sure of the date, but I think it was for the 30,000 kilometer check-up.

Agent: Your car is the Sonata model, right?

Car owner: No, it's an Accent.

Agent: Wow, you're kind of tall for an Accent! Any special problems or is this a regular check-up?

Car owner: Well, I want the 40,000 kilometer check-up, but it's been heating up. In fact, I think it was last Monday that the heat gauge got all the way up into the red zone.

Agent: Do you check the fluids periodically?

Car owner: No, but I did after it cooled down. Had to add about a liter of water.

Agent: Hmmmmm. Let's look at it. ..... I see you've had some accidents

Car owner: Just some fender-benders. I'm not worried about any body work, but I would like to have the seat belt on the driver's side fixed. It doesn't re-wind itself anymore. (pause...) On second thought, just leave the seat belt as it is. I want to keep the bill low.

Agent: We can replace it if you change your mind. Let's go back inside...(pause)... Please have a seat. (...sound of paper shuffling...) Here's a list of everything we check at 40,000 kilometers. If there is anything else you want checked, let me know.

Car owner: (...pause...) No, this seems fine. Will you call me when the car is ready?

Agent: Sure we will.

Car owner: I have a different phone number now because I changed jobs.

Agent: What's your new contact number – your mobile would be best.

Car owner: 0563334972. Can you tell me when it will be ready?

Agent: It depends. By the way, do you want us to call you if we see that the charge will be more than SR 2000.

Car owner: Oh gosh...yes, please. Do you think it'll be ready by Thursday?

Agent: It should be. If you call to check on things, any agent can tell you if it's ready. Just be sure to give whoever answers the work order number.

Car owner: Great. Thanks a lot.

It is probably wise to make some notes for a longer dialogue like this one. Since you will see only the answer choices in your test booklet, you will not be certain which dialogues are the longer ones. However, a clue that you can use is to notice how many questions are related to each dialogue. In any case, there is no harm in making a note of information from even a very very short dialogue. The only harm in your note-taking can come from focusing on writing so much information that you miss some parts of the dialogue. Remember to keep your sharpest and most important focus on the dialogue itself.

3. When was the car owner at the Service Center the last time?

    A. For the 13,000-kilometer check-up.

    B. For the 30,000-kilometer check-up.

    C. For the 14,000-kilometer check-up.

    D. For the 40,000-kilometer check-up.

Answer 3: This kind of information about numbers is good to make note of while listening. It may not be something you need to remember, but then again it might be. When listening, the problem here is distinguishing between 13/30 or 14/40. The correct answer is (B). He was at the service center the last time for the 30,000 kilo check-up.

4. Why is the agent surprised when he sees that the customer has an Accent and not a Sonata?

    Because the customer is:

    A. kind of small.

    B. kind of tall.

    C. kind of bulky.

    D. kind of thin.

Answer 4: The agent assumes that the customer has the bigger model of Hyundai, a Sonata, because he sees that the customer is a big guy. We hear him say in the dialogue that he (the customer) is kind of tall for an Accent, one of the smallest compact cars that Hyundai makes. The agent does not mean that the customer is small, as in choice (A), but rather that he is tall to be driving an Accent. The correct answer is therefore (B).

5. What kind of problem has the car owner had recently?

    A. The car got very hot.

    B. The seat belt is dented.

    C. The car is too small.

    D. The heat gauge is broken.

Answer 5: The correct response here is (A). Seeing the word 'heat' in (D) may make it a tempting choice, but there is no problem with the heat gauge. The customer later mentions a problem with the seat belt, but then tells the agent to leave it. Regarding (C), the agent may think the car is too small for the tall customer, but apparently the customer doesn't. Thus we are left only with (A) which we already have seen to be the correct response.

6. How often does the car owner check the fluids?

He checks the fluids:

A. often, maybe daily.
B. maybe periodically.
C. seldom or never.
D. only when it gets hot.

Answer 6: In response to the agent's question about how often he checks the car fluids and in particular the water in the radiator, the customer indicates that he does not usually check the fluids at all, but he did on the day that the car overheated. Thus the only correct response for this question is (D).

7. Why do you think the car owner decided **NOT** to have the seat belt fixed?

Because it:

A. will cost too much.
B. will be too old.
C. wasn't out of order.
D. was broken again.

Answer 7: Finding the correct answer involves understanding the customer's statement that he wants "to keep the bill low". There is no information in the dialogue to make us think that the seat belt is too old as in answer (B). Choice (C) can't be the correct response because the owner indicates that it doesn't re-wind itself: it is out of order. Choice (D) doesn't make any sense with the information given in the dialogue. That leaves us with choice (A).

8. Why does the car owner have a different phone number now?

Because he:

A. changed his record.
B. has a different car.
C . has a different job.
D. changed his house.

Answer 8: The car owner mentions that he has a different phone number now, so he wants to make sure that the agent can call him at the right number. In other words, he wants the agent to change the phone number in the record. Thus, choice (A) cannot be correct. The record needs to be changed; it hasn't been done yet as (A) would imply. Nor does the car owner say anything at all about having a different car, so choice (B) is not correct. He does explicitly say in the dialogue that he has a different phone number now because he has a different job, so choice (C) is the correct response. What about choice (D)? If he has a different job, then he might well live in a different house or apartment. But nothing is said about that. We don't know from the information we hear in the dialogue.

9. When will the car be ready for the customer?

A. Probably by Thursday.
B. If possible, before Thursday.
C. When he pays the bill.
D. When he phones them.

Answer 9: Only choice (A) is correct. The agent responds 'it should be' to the customer's question as to whether the car will be ready by Thursday. Of course, he will have to pay the bill – but the car will probably be ready by Thursday.

10. Why would the Service Center call the customer before the car is ready?

If the repair will cost:

A. around SR 2,000.
B. less than SR 2,000.
C. more than SR 2,000.
D. exactly SR 2,000.

Answer 10: The agent asks the customer if the Service Center should phone him to authorize the repair work if it costs **more than SR 2,000**, so only choice (C) is correct. We can assume that the repair work will proceed without the Service Center calling the customer if the bill is not going to be higher than SR 2,000.

11. If the car owner calls to check on his car, what information should he give?

A. His mobile number.
B. The work order number.
C. The agent's number.
D. His new employer.

Answer 11: The agent tells the customer that if he, the customer, phones to check on his car, he should give the work order number, so choice (B) is correct. Nothing is said in the dialogue that would make choices (A) or (D) correct. There is no need to ask for the agent's number as in choice (C). In fact, the agent may not even have a number. If he does, we hear nothing about it in the dialogue.

# Trial Answer Sheet for Listening Questions

### Instructions

Listen carefully to the recording and then answer the questions. For each question, choose the best answer and mark it on your answer sheet.

## Recording Number 1

1)

A. That Sultan isn't using his time well.

B. That Sultan isn't using his money well.

C. The speaker is surprised at Sultan's appearance.

D . The speaker wants to give Sultan some medical advice.

2)

A. He has been sleeping a lot.

B. He doesn't have electricity in his room.

C. He is low on oil and needs a lot more.

D. He has been studying all night long.

## Recording Number 2

3)

A. For the 13,000 kilometer check-up.

B. For the 30,000 kilometer check-up.

C. For the 14,000 kilometer check-up.

D. For the 40,000 kilometer check-up.

4)

Because the customer is:

A. kind of small.

B. kind of tall.

C. kind of bulky.

D. kind of thin.

5)

A. The car got very hot.

B. The seat belt is dented.

C. The car is too small.

D. The heat gauge is broken.

6)

He checks the fluids:

A. often, maybe daily.

B. maybe periodically.

C. seldom or never.

D. only when it gets hot.

7)

Because it:

A. will cost too much.

B. will be too old.

C. wasn't out of order.

D. was broken again.

8)

Because he:

A. changed his record.

B. has a different car.

C. has a different job.

D. changed his house.

9)

A. Probably by Thursday.

B. If possible, before Thursday.

C. When he pays the bill.

D. When he phones them.

10)

If the repair will cost:

A. around SR 2,000.

B. less than SR 2,000.

C. more than SR 2,000.

D. exactly SR 2,000.

11)

A. His mobile number.

B. The work order number.

C. The agent's number.

D. His new employer.

Stop!
End of Section.

| KEY to correct answers | |
|---|---|
| 1 – C | 7 - A |
| 2 – D | 8 - C |
| 3 – B | 9 – A |
| 4 – B | 10 – C |
| 5 – A | 11 – B |
| 6 – D | |


1
2
3
Part Two
A Brief Review of English Structure

# Part II: A Brief Review of English Structure

As an aid and guide in your preparation for taking the Standardized Test of English Proficiency (STEP), we offer the following material. Obviously, this cannot be other than a cursory overview focused on structure. However, this guide can help you identify your areas of weakness and allow you to better prepare for the STEP exam.

As you already know, it is possible to master the rules for proper grammatical use and even the bulk of the exceptions and still not be at ease in the actual use of the language. However, we feel that this kind of overview can trigger and freshen the knowledge and ability you have acquired in the use of English.

The format for this brief review will branch out from the eight basic categories for words: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. This will afford a very brief summary, hopefully touching on areas that will stimulate your acquired ability for the use of English and lead you to your own resources (books, webpages, etc.) for a more in depth investigation.

Words are the building blocks that enable us to express ourselves, whether in English or Arabic. At the same time, learning a language is more than memorizing lists of vocabulary words. The basics of how to combine words with one another provide the possibility of communication. Thus, the categories for words (or parts of speech) and how to combine them are key to the development of fluency.

And what is fluency? At heart, it simply means the ability to communicate a thought, an idea, a plan, an intention, or a desire in a way that is understood by others. The structure is important, but the correct structure is secondary to successful communication.

Often native speakers break some of the most elementary structure rules of language. In fact, they may not even be aware of the rules. However, for the one who is learning a second or third language, the goal, ideally, is to utilize the correct structures in the process of communicating. Later, once this has been mastered, going outside or beyond structure may be a prerogative called upon unconsciously to further enhance communication. For the moment, however, our concern is for proper usage, correct structure, and mastery of the rules.

The traditional categories for words (or parts of speech) are eight in number. Some of these categories are subdivided into other categories. In this overview, we will touch on some of those possibilities within the traditional classification, but maintain the eight classifications as follows:

1. Verbs such as: *be, have, do, work, go, study, travel, eat, play, can, swim, understand.*
2. Nouns such as: *man, city, language, country, door, house, school, mouse, computer, love, fear, determination, faith.*
3. Adjectives such as: *seven, big, new, black, expensive, ancient, tired. (The definite article the and the indefinite article a take the adjectival position.)*
4. Adverbs such as: *loudly, well, often, clearly, quietly, exactly, very.*
5. Pronouns such as: *you, ours, some, my, her, himself, they.*
6. Prepositions such as: *at, in, on, from, under, with, beyond, as, during.*
7. Conjunctions such as: *and, but, although, since, thus, in order to, as long as.*
8. Interjections such as: *ah, dear, er, um, well, ouch, oh, wow, huh.*

At the end of this review you will find a listing of some websites that you may find helpful. From the websites given you may also find many other helpful sites.

Once you have completed your review, you may proceed and take the practice tests provided in this book.



# Part II: A Brief Review of English Structure



## 1. Verbs

Verbs are words that express action (Khalid and Muhammad **play** football.) or relate a state of being (Khalid and Muhammad **are** happy.). Verbs have various forms to express different tenses. Roughly speaking, tense can be thought of as time: past, present or future along with variations within those three dimensions. However, it is important to keep in mind that the idea of time as expressed in grammar does not always correlate with clock time.

### Simple Present Tense

HABITUAL ACTION
The present tense in its simple form is used to express an action that is habitual. For example: Khalid and Muhammad play football on weekends. Although this is called the simple present tense, it may not be something that Khalid and Muhammad are doing right now, the immediate present. It is something they are in the habit of doing at the time specified – on weekends. They may be in class now and therefore not playing football at this very moment -- or it may be the weekend, but it is late at night and they are sleeping.

OBJECTIVE FACT
The present tense is also used to express objective facts. For example: The sun rises in the east. It is always true. This is simply how the sun operates and it is a scientific fact. The simple present used in this way means that something was true in the past, is true in the present, and will be true in the future.

THIRD PERSON –s
One of the difficulties in using this tense is that in only one instance the verb adds an –s at the end. This is very simple, but that in fact makes it much easier to forget. This happens only in the 3rd person singular (he, she, it), not in the 3rd person plural (they).

### Simple Past Tense

COMPLETED ACTION
The simple past is used when an action has stopped; it is something that happened before now and it is finished. It happened at a particular time; it began and ended in the past.

A verb in the simple past ends in -ed. That is the situation for most verbs in English. They are called **regular verbs**. *Muhammad and Khalid played football last Thursday*. Often there are additional words that indicate that the action or state of being referred to is over and done with. In the sentence above, the words last Thursday indicate that this is a time in the past. Other examples of words that indicate past tense are: yesterday, (two days) ago, etc.

There are some verbs that do not follow this rule. They have different forms in the simple past that must simply be memorized. Since they do not follow the regular rule for forming the simple past, they are called **irregular verbs**. Although there are quite a few irregular verbs, about 150 or so are in common use and easy to master simply by memorization and repeated usage. For example, *write* is an irregular verb that does not add an –ed to form the simple past tense form. Instead there are usually internal changes of the vowel and sometimes some other letters also: *write / wrote, teach / taught, fall / fell, stand / stood*. In the case of *bite / bit* the only change is removing the silent –e for the simple past tense form. A few irregular verbs don't change at all: *put / put*, *hit / hit* and *quit / quit*, for example.

## Future Tense

The words used to refer to future time in English are not strictly speaking a future tense. The construction that is commonly referred to as the future tense is the simple form of the main verb preceded by the word **will**. The form of the word **will** never changes for person or number; it remains the same for all persons, both singular and plural.

### Making statements:

| Simple Present | Simple Past | (Simple Future)*** |
|---|---|---|
| I **like** coffee.<br>She **likes** coffee.<br>Khalid **likes** coffee.<br>Sarah **likes** coffee.<br>You **like** coffee.<br>They **like** coffee.<br>Khalid and Sarah **like** coffee. | I **ate** a sandwich.<br>He **ate** a sandwich.<br>Khalid **ate** a sandwich.<br>Sarah **ate** a sandwich.<br>You **ate** a sandwich.<br>They **ate** a sandwich.<br>Khalid and Sarah **ate** a sandwich. | I **will study** tomorrow.<br>She **will study** tomorrow.<br>Khalid **will study** tomorrow.<br>Sarah **will study** tomorrow.<br>You **will study** tomorrow.<br>They **will study** tomorrow.<br>Khalid and Sarah **will study** tomorrow. |

*** The simple future can also be expressed with **be going to**. There is no change in the form of **going to**, but **be** must agree with the subject (singular or plural) and the person (1st person, 2nd person, 3rd person).

I am going to study tomorrow. She is going to study tomorrow.
Khalid is going to study tomorrow.
Sarah is going to study tomorrow.
They are going to study tomorrow.
Khalid and Sarah are going to study tomorrow.

# Part II: A Brief Review of English Structure

To form a question with all verbs in the simple present and simple past tenses (except BE and the MODALS), a form of the verb DO becomes necessary. DO is also used in short responses to yes/no questions and in the formation of negative statements.

### Simple Present (do/does for 3rd person singular only)

Khalid plays football every evening.
Does Khalid play football every evening? (simple form for main verb)
Yes, he does. He plays football every evening.

No he doesn't.
He doesn't play football every evening. (simple form for main verb)

### Simple Past (did for all persons)

Khalid played football yesterday.
Did Khalid play football yesterday? (simple form for main verb)
Yes, he did. He played football yesterday.

No, he didn't.
He didn't play football yesterday. (simple form for main verb)

## Making questions:

| Simple Present | Simple Past | (Simple Future) |
|---|---|---|
| **Do** I **like** coffee?<br>**Does** she **like** coffee?<br>**Does** Khalid **like** coffee?<br>**Does** Sarah **like** coffee?<br>**Do** you **like** coffee?<br>**Do** they **like** coffee?<br>**Do** Khalid and Sarah **like** coffee? | **Did** I **eat** a sandwich?<br>**Did** he **eat** a sandwich?<br>**Did** Khalid **eat** a sandwich?<br>**Did** Sarah **eat** a sandwich?<br>**Did** you **eat** a sandwich?<br>**Did** they **eat** a sandwich?<br>**Did** Khalid and Sarah **eat** a sandwich? | **Will** I **study** tomorrow?<br>**Will** she **study** tomorrow?<br>**Will** Khalid **study** tomorrow?<br>**Will** Sarah **study** tomorrow?<br>**Will** you **study** tomorrow?<br>**Will** they **study** tomorrow?<br>**Will** Khalid and Sarah **study** tomorrow? |

Word order changes in order to make a question. The first word will be the helping verb which always comes before the subject. In the Simple Present, the helping verb is **do**. In the Simple Past it is **did**. In the case of the (Simple Future), the modal **will** comes before the subject. If a sentence has **be** as a main verb, no helping verb is needed; the **be** will simply be placed in front of the subject. (Examples: **Are** they happy? **Is** he a student?)

## Making negative statements:

| Simple Present | Simple Past | (Simple Future) |
|---|---|---|
| I do **not*** like** coffee.<br>She **does not** ** **like** coffee.<br>Khalid **does not** ** **like** coffee.<br>Sarah **does not** ** **like** coffee.<br>You **do not** *** **like** coffee<br>They **do not** *** **like** coffee.<br>Khalid and Sarah **do not** *** **like** coffee. | I **did not** ** **eat** a sandwich.<br>He **did not eat** a sandwich.<br>Khalid **did not eat** a sandwich.<br>Sarah **did not eat** a sandwich.<br>You **did not eat** a sandwich.<br>They **did not eat** a sandwich.<br>Khalid and Sarah **did not eat** a sandwich. | I **will not** ** **study** tomorrow.<br>She **will not study** tomorrow.<br>Khalid **will not study** tomorrow.<br>Sarah **will not study** tomorrow.<br>You **will not study** tomorrow.<br>They **will not study** tomorrow.<br>Khalid and Sarah **will not study** tomorrow. |

*****do not = don't**  ****did not = didn't**  ****will not = won't**

****does not = doesn't**

In the chart above, note that there is no change in the main verb in the Simple Present and the (Simple Future). However, in the Simple Past the main verb is in its simple form – which looks exactly like its simple present tense form without the third person singular -s ending. The verb **did**, the simple past form of **do**, shows the past tense in negation. Negation is indicated by placing **not** immediately after the helping verb and in front of the main verb. The **not** can be joined with the helping verb to make contractions.

Example: I **do not** like coffee. I **don't** like coffee.



# Part II: A Brief Review of English Structure

## HELPING VERBS

All tenses other than the simple present tense, simple past tense and the so-called future tense must have verbs to assist or help the main verb. As already seen, the main verb in the so-called simple future needs some help from the verb **will**.*** These verbs are usually called **helping verbs**. They are: **be**, **have**, and **do**.

***Will** is also called a modal. This will be discussed later.

## BE as the main (only) verb in a sentence.

Look at the following charts to see how the verb BE is used when it is the main verb:

### Making statements:

| Simple Present | Simple Past | (Simple Future) |
|---|---|---|
| I **am** happy now.<br>She **is** happy now.<br>Khalid **is** happy now.<br>Sarah **is** happy now.<br>You **are** happy now.<br>They **are** happy now.<br>Khalid and Sarah **are** happy now. | I **was** happy yesterday.<br>He **was** happy yesterday.<br>Khalid **was** happy yesterday.<br>Sarah **was** happy yesterday.<br>You **were** happy yesterday.<br>They **were** happy yesterday.<br>Khalid and Sarah **were** happy yesterday. | I **will be** happy tomorrow.<br>She **will be** happy tomorrow.<br>Khalid **will be** happy tomorrow.<br>Sarah **will be** happy tomorrow.<br>You **will be** happy tomorrow.<br>They **will be** happy tomorrow.<br>Khalid and Sarah **will be** happy tomorrow. |

### Making questions:

| Simple Present | Simple Past | (Simple Future) |
|---|---|---|
| **Am** I happy now?<br>**Is** she happy now?<br>**Is** Khalid happy now?<br>**Is** Sarah happy now?<br>**Are** you happy now?<br>**Are** they happy now?<br>**Are** Khalid and Sarah happy now? | **Was** I happy yesterday?<br>**Was** he happy yesterday?<br>**Was** Khalid happy yesterday?<br>**Was** Sarah happy yesterday?<br>**Were** you happy yesterday?<br>**Were** they happy yesterday?<br>**Were** Khalid and Sarah happy yesterday? | **Will** I **be** happy tomorrow?<br>**Will** she **be** happy tomorrow?<br>**Will** Khalid **be** happy tomorrow?<br>**Will** Sarah **be** happy tomorrow?<br>**Will** you **be** happy tomorrow?<br>**Will** they **be** happy tomorrow?<br>**Will** Khalid and Sarah **be** happy tomorrow? |

***in –Wh questions, the –Wh word comes first, then BE, then the subject:

| Where are you now? | Where were you yesterday? | Where will you be tomorrow? |
|---|---|---|
| What is his name? | Who wrote that book? | When is she coming? |

## Making negative statements:

| Simple Present Negation | Simple Past Negation | (Simple Future) Negation |
|---|---|---|
| I **am not***** happy now.<br>She **is not**** happy now.<br>Khalid **is not**** happy now.<br>Sarah **is not**** happy now.<br>You **are not*** happy now.<br>They **are not*** happy now.<br>Khalid and Sarah **are not*** happy now. | I **was not*** happy yesterday.<br>He**was not*** happy yesterday.<br>Khalid **was not*** happy yesterday.<br>Sarah **was not*** happy yesterday.<br>You **were not**** happy yesterday.<br>They **were not**** happy yesterday.<br>Khalid and Sarah **were not**** happy yesterday. | I **will not*** **be** happy tomorrow.<br>She **will not*** **be** happy tomorrow.<br>Khalid **will not*** **be** happy tomorrow.<br>Sarah **will not*** **be** happy tomorrow.<br>You **will not*** **be** happy tomorrow.<br>They **will not*** **be** happy tomorrow.<br>Khalid and Sarah **will not*** **be** happy tomorrow. |

*** **am not is never contracted**
** is not = isn't
* are not = aren't

* was not = wasn't
** were not = weren't

* will not = won't

The verb **BE** is also a helping verb in the continuous tenses. Remember:

- **BE** always agrees with the subject in tense and number ( **is, am, are; was, were** ) whether it is the main verb or a helping verb in the present, past, and future continuous tenses.
- In a yes / no question, **BE** always comes first followed by the subject – both as the main verb and as a helping verb in the present and past continuous tenses.
- In a –Wh question, the –Wh word is first, then **BE**, then the subject – both as the main verb and as a helping verb in the present and past continuous tenses.
- In a negative statement, the word **not** comes immediately after **BE** – both as the main verb and as a helping verb in the present, past, and future continuous tenses.
- In a negative statement, **BE** and **not** are often written and spoken as contractions, whether **BE** is the main verb or a helping verb in the present, past, and future continuous tenses.
- In the present, past and future continuous tenses, **BE** must stand with the –ing form of the verb. (See the examples in the box on the following page.

### Present Continuous

SOMETHING IS HAPPENING NOW (RIGHT NOW)
Khalid and Muhammad **are playing** football.

Mustafa **is studying**.

### Past Continuous***

SOMETHING WAS HAPPENING (AT A PARTICULAR TIME IN THE PAST)
Khalid and Muhammad **were playing** football Thursday evening.
Mustafa **was studying** Thursday evening.

### Future Continuous

SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN (AT A PARTICULAR TIME IN THE FUTURE)
Khalid and Muhammad **will be playing** football next Thursday evening.
Mustafa **will be studying** next Thursday evening.

***The past continuous often indicates or implies a second past action which interrupted the action in question. The second past action (or interrupting action) is in the simple past tense:

Saleh **was eating** when the phone **rang**. (use of **when** with simple past)
While Saleh **was eating**, the phone **rang**. (use of **while** with past continuous)
In this example, the phone rang (the 2nd or interrupting action, thus in the simple past) during the time that Saleh **was eating**.

### Interrupting past action vs. Sequential past action

It is important to note that some verbs are not usually used in the continuous tenses. These are verbs that indicate a quick action not thought of as having duration. In such cases, both verbs may be in the simple past. He started the car and drove away. It would be **incorrect** to say, He **was starting** his car and drove away.
Of course, there can be two actions, both completed in the past, but neither action being an interrupting action; rather the two (or more) actions may happen in sequence: Saleh **ate** his dinner, **did** his homework, and **went** to bed.

### Stative verbs express 'existing state', not action or activity

There are also some verbs that are not used in any of the continuous tenses. They are often called stative verbs and relate to the senses, emotions, or states of being rather than activity or actions. Some of the most common are: *think, believe, know, want, need, like, hate, fear, hear*. However, some of these stative verbs can be used in such a way as to indicate action: *think, have, taste, smell, see, feel*, for example. If they indicate action, then of course they can be used in the continuous tenses. Look at a couple examples here:

| | |
|---|---|
| I **think** he is a kind man. (existing state) | I **am thinking** about my father. (activity) |
| This rose **smells** good. (existing state) | Saleh **is smelling** the rose. (activity) |

## Question Formation

| yes/no questions | -Wh questions |
|---|---|
| **Continuous** | |
| Is Mustafa studying? | Where is Mustafa studying? |
| **Past Continuous** | |
| Were they playing football yesterday? | Why were they playing football yesterday? |
| **Future Continuous** | |
| Will they be playing football tomorrow? | Where will they be playing football tomorrow? |

When BE is used as a helping verb, a statement is made negative in the same way; that is, by adding the word **not** after the form of BE which is then followed by the –ing form of the main verb in the continuous tenses. Look at the examples in the chart:

## Negation

### Present Continuous

Khalid and Muhammad **aren't (are not)** playing volleyball.
Mustafa **isn't (is not)** sleeping right now.

### Past Continuous

Khalid and Muhammad **weren't (were not)** playing volleyball yesterday.
Mustafa **wasn't (was not)** sleeping in class yesterday.

### Future Continuous

Khalid and Muhammad **won't (will not)** be playing football tomorrow.
Mustafa **won't (will not)** be sleeping in class tomorrow.

## HAVE

The verb have is necessary in the formation of the perfect tenses (along with **will** for the future perfect). The perfect tenses are used to place one event or action before another. One action preceded another. The main verb in the perfect tenses is the third form (past participle) and the helping verb **have** agrees with the subject in tense and number.

### Present Perfect

SOMETHING HAPPENED:

At an unspecified time before now; the exact time is not important.

I have already eaten.

Several times before now (repetition); the exact time is not important.

Sarah has eaten in this restaurant many times.

Began in the past and continues to the present (used with **for** or **since**).

They have not eaten in this restaurant for 3 months. (for + a **duration** of time)

We have not eaten in this restaurant since last year. (since + a **particular** time)

### Past Perfect

TWO EVENTS, BOTH IN THE PAST:

One event in the past **completed before** a second event **in the past**.

Khalid **had eaten** his meal when Muhammad **entered** the restaurant.

### Future Perfect

TWO EVENTS, BOTH IN THE FUTURE:

One event **will be completed before** another event (or time) **in the future**.

He **will have finished** his homework by the time he **goes** to bed.***

They will have finished their homework by bedtime.

She will have finished her homework by 8:00.

*** Note that the simple present (in the phrase by the time he goes to bed) is used in this sentence to express an event in the future. As previously mentioned, tense does not always correspond to clock or calendar time.

# Question Formation

| yes/no questions | -Wh questions |
|---|---|
| **Present Perfect** | |
| Has he eaten his breakfast? | Where has he been all day? |
| **Past Perfect** | |
| Had he finished his homework before he slept? | Where had be been before he went to Africa? |
| **Future Perfect** | |
| Will she have finished the project by tomorrow? | How far will he have driven by this time next week? |

Question formation follows the rule: inverted word order for yes/no questions. That means that the **have/ has** helping verb will take the first position and the subject the second position followed then by the past participle form of the main verb in the present perfect and past perfect tenses.

# Negation

### Present Perfect

The children haven't eaten their vegetables.
She hasn't finished her homework.

### Past Perfect

Sarah and Miriam hadn't completed the test when the teacher collected them.
Mustafa hadn't missed a class until yesterday.

### Future Perfect

My mother won't have had time to prepare the meal, so maybe we can help her.
They won't have left by now, so we can still visit with them.

# Part II: A Brief Review of English Structure

Negation likewise follows the same pattern we have seen before: the word **not** is inserted immediately after the helping verb – in this case, the correct form of have. As previously seen, the **not** often forms a contraction with the helping verb:

**have not = haven't** | **had not = hadn't**
**has not = hasn't** | **will not = won't**

In the present perfect continuous tense, **have / has** is used along with **been** and the main verb with an –ing ending (the present participle form). In the past perfect progressive tense, the form is the same except that **have** is used in its unchanging past tense form, **had**. The future perfect progressive is formed by **will have been** plus the present participle form of the main verb.

### Present Perfect Continuous

CONTINUATION OF AN ACTION FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT
They have been studying for their exams all week.

DURATION OF AN ACTION FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT
She has been studying in the library since 8:00 this morning.

### Past Perfect Continuous

CONTINUATION OF PAST ACTION IN RELATION TO A 2ND PAST ACTION
Khalid's hair was wet when he got home because he had been swimming.

DURATION OF PAST ACTION IN RELATION TO A 2ND PAST ACTION
She had been waiting for an hour before the doctor arrived.

### Future Perfect Continuous

DURATION OF FUTURE ACTION IN RELATION TO A 2ND TIME OR ACTION
They will have been relaxing on the beach for a week by this time next month.
He will have been teaching for 20 years at the end of this year.

# Question Formation

| yes/no questions | | -Wh questions |
|---|---|---|
| | Present Perfect Continuous | |
| Has he been studying for the exam all week? | | Why has she been studying in the library since 8:oo this morning? |
| | Past Perfect Continuous | |
| Had she been waiting for the doctor all morning? | | Why had he been swimming with his shoes on? |
| | Future Perfect Continuous | |
| Will she have been waiting for us all this time? | | How long will he have been speaking by the time we arrive? |

Question formation follows the same pattern in the perfect continuous tenses: the first position in a yes/no question will be the helping verb followed by the subject; immediately after the subject will be the past participle of BE (been) which will always be followed finally by the –ing form of the main verb.:

## Present Perfect Continuous: Question

Helping verb (present) + subject + been + -ing form of the main verb.

## Past Perfect Continuous: Question

Helping verb (past) + subject + been + -ing form of the main verb.

## Future Perfect Continuous: Question

Will + subject + helping verb (present) + been + -ing form of the main verb.

For –Wh questions the –Wh word precedes the patterns given above.

## Negation

### Present Perfect Continuous

The children **haven't** been eating their vegetables this week

She **hasn't** been working on her assignment.

### Past Perfect Continuous

Sarah and Miriam **hadn't** been reading the newspapers at all last summer.

Mustafa **hadn't** been attending any of his classes.

### Future Perfect Continuous

My mother **won't** have been sleeping long if I call her right now.

They **won't** have been enjoying themselves in this freezing winter weather.

Negation follows the pattern of placing the word **not** after the helping verb. The examples in the box above use **not** in its contracted form.

# Modal Verbs

Modals are unique verbs. The most common modals are:

***can, could – will, would – may, might – shall, should – must, ought to.***

Their form never changes.

- They do not add the third person singular –s.
- They have no –ing form.
- They can never be followed directly by another modal.
- In verb phrases they must be followed by the simple form of other verbs.
- They never follow directly after the word *to*.

The following tables show some possible meanings of the most common modals listed above. They can be used to express a multitude of meanings that are best acquired by the familiarity gained by usage. Extensive reading, interaction with native English speakers as well as non-native English speakers, listening to English language radio, watching English language television programs and films and using the Internet in English are all some ways to acquire a comfortable sense of the scope of modal usage – as well as a broader general fluency in English.

| Can and could express ability, possibility, and permission. |
|---|

She can speak 3 languages. (ability)
Our team can win the football match. (possiblility)
The teacher said we can go home early today. (permission)

| May and might express permission and possibility. |
|---|

You may come into the office now. (permission)
X might be the best example. (possibility)

| Shall, should, must, and ought to show advisability, obligation, expectation, and chance. |
|---|

Shall (Should) we go to Venezuela on our next vacation? (advisability)
Everyone should be careful crossing streets. (obligation)
The guests ought to be arriving soon. (expectation)
If you should see Khalid, give him my regards. (chance)
Doctors must do their best to help their patients. (obligation)

Will and would express agreement, requests, offers, and invitations.

They will be here early in the morning. (agreement)
Would you please pass the salt? (request)
Would you like to come for dinner tomorrow? (invitation / offer)

## QUESTION FORMATION WITH MODAL VERBS

Will he bring his notes for us to study? (yes-no question)
Modal + subject + simple verb

When will he bring his notes for us to study? (-Wh question)
-Wh word + modal + subject + simple verb

## NEGATION WITH MODAL VERBS

Negation with modal verbs = adding the word **not** after the modal.

He can't* come today.
They shouldn't* smoke so much.
She might not understand what he said.
Khalid and Muhammad wouldn't* let me play football with them.

*The word not usually joins the modal that precedes it to form a contraction, with some exceptions:

| | |
|---|---|
| can not = can't | might not = usually not contracted |
| could not = couldn't | ought not = usually not contracted |
| will not = won't | have to = doesn't have to / don't have to |
| would not = wouldn't | shall not = **never** contracted |
| should not = shouldn't | may not = **never** contracted |
| must not = mustn't (**very rare**) | had better = **never** contracted |

shall is seldom if ever used in American English

## Verb forms with IF: Conditional Sentences

Conditional sentences consist of 2 clauses: the conditional clause, often called the if clause, and the result clause. Basically, there are 3 different conditionals as shown in the following box:

| | Meaning of the "IF CLAUSE" | Verb form in the "IF CLAUSE" | Verb form in the "RESULT CLAUSE" |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | True in the present/future | simple present | simple present<br>simple future |
| 2 | Untrue in the present / future | simple past | would + simple infinitive |
| 3 | Untrue in the past | past perfect | would have + past participle |

*** Chart and following information adapted from Understanding and Using English Grammar by Azar.

### Examples:

Form 1: If I don't eat a snack at night, I'm not able to sleep well.
If oil is mixed with water, it floats.
If I finish my project next week, I will take a small vacation.

Form 2: If my parents were here right now, there would be no problem.
If **I were** a teacher, I would give a lot of homework. ***

Form 3: If I had seen the problem beforehand, I would have done something about it.
If he had been our teacher, we would have had a lot of homework.

*** **Were** is used for all persons in the simple past in the conditional. **Was** is sometimes used by native speakers with I, he, she, it. However, it is considered to be very very informal if acceptable at all.

# Part II: A Brief Review of English Structure

## Verb forms following WISH

Wish indicates that the speaker wants reality to be different. Verb forms are similar to the forms used in the conditional. WISH is followed by a noun clause. The word **that** can be used or left out.

**A wish about the present:**

| | |
|---|---|
| I don't know French. | I wish (that) I knew French. |
| He can't understand me. | I wish (that) he could understand me. |
| It is very cold right now. | I wish (that) it weren't cold right now. |

**A wish about the past:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Samir didn't come. | I wish (that) Samir had come. |
| They sold the last one. | I wish (that) they hadn't sold the last one. |

**A wish about the future:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Khalid can't come tomorrow. | I wish (that) Khalid could come tomorrow. |
| He isn't going to be there. | I wish (that) he were going to be there. |

**Using WOULD to make wishes about the future. The speaker wants something to happen in the future. The wish may or may not come true.**

### Examples:

Samir is supposed to call me. I wish the phone would ring. (I want the phone to ring.)
There is a sandstorm. I wish it would stop. (I want the sandstorm to stop.)

**Using** ...WISH YOU WOULD to make a request.

### Examples:

We are going shopping tonight. We wish you would come with us.
They don't understand the homework. They wish you would explain it to them.

# 2. NOUNS

Nouns are words that name things: **car, window, person, school, teacher.** All of the examples mentioned are concrete objects that can be pointed to, touched, seen, felt. However, many nouns do not refer to concrete objects. For example, a person cannot touch or point to or taste something like **love, hate, joy, war, peace, expansion, memory**.

Sometimes a word is a noun in one sentence, but in another sentence a verb. For example: My sons **love** football. (verb) They also have a strong **love** for basketball. (noun) In the first sentence, **love** is a verb. In the second sentence, **love** is a noun.

Nevertheless, in spite of the complications mentioned, we can define a noun as a word that names a person, place, or thing – as long as we keep in mind that nouns give names to objective material realities as well as subjective non-material (abstract) realities.

Nouns are not subject to as many changes in form as verbs. Nouns can be singular or plural if they are count nouns. Some nouns are non-count and have only one form, never taking the ending that marks a plural noun.

## Singular / Plural – Count Nouns

Count nouns are for things that can be counted. I can have one or I can have ten of whatever it is. For example, car, house, pen, horse, school, teacher, student, coin, table.

A singular count noun cannot appear alone in a sentence. It always has at least one other word like **a/the/my/this** in front of it.

I am **a student.**
**That table** is beautiful.
**My teacher** has good experience.
He saw **the horse** run away.

Other words may also appear in front of a noun:

That large wooden table is beautiful. (A noun and the words that modify or explain something about the noun are called **noun phrases**.)

When a count noun is in the plural, it can stand alone in a sentence or it may have other words in front of it:

Houses in the Gulf are often made of stone.
Those large expensive houses were built last year.

The plural noun is formed by adding –s or –es at the end of the word.

| | |
|---|---|
| student | students |
| car | cars |
| table | tables |
| watch | watches |
| class | classes |

General quantities of a count noun can be indicated by the use of: **many, a few, a lot of***, and **some***:

The market has **a lot of** apples, but only **a few** bananas.
**Many** questions on the final exam were difficult.
**Some** watches are very expensive.

In questions, the word **any*** is used with count nouns.

Do you have **any** questions about the test tomorrow?

* **a lot of**, **some** and **any** can be used with both count and non-count nouns.

## Non-Count Nouns

Non-count nouns are things (or substances) that cannot be divided into separate units. We cannot "count" them without somehow packaging them. For example, we cannot count "milk". We can count "bottles of milk" or "litres of milk", but we cannot count "milk" itself. Here are some more uncountable nouns:

| | |
|---|---|
| music | (but we can count songs) |
| art | (but we can count paintings) |
| furniture | (but we can count chairs and sofas) |
| oil | (but we can count barrels of oil) |
| money | (but we can count dollars, riyals, yen, etc.) |

Non-count nouns are grammatically singular. In a sentence, the verb for a non-count noun therefore remains in the singular.

The indefinite article (a/an) cannot be used with non-count nouns, but the definite article (the) can be.  The indefinite article implies one of something that can be more than one; the definite article does not.

To indicate quantity, the words **some***, **much**, **a lot of***, **a little** are used.  For example:

Bill Gates has **a lot of** money.
There isn't **much** milk left in this carton.
Khalid has **some** antique furniture in his sitting room.
I only want **a little** rice.

In questions or in the negative, **any*** can be used with non-count nouns:

I don't have **any** money left.
Do you have **any** bread?

*** a lot of, some and any** can be used with both count and non-count nouns.

Some nouns can be both count and non-count, depending on context.  Look at the examples:

| Countable | | Uncountable |
|---|---|---|
| There are two hairs in my coffee! | **hair** | I don't have much hair. |
| There are two lights in our bedroom. | **light** | Close the curtain. There's too much light! |
| Shhhhh! I thought I heard a noise. | **noise** | It's difficult to work when there is so much noise. |
| Have you got a paper to read? (= newspaper) | **paper** | I want to draw a picture. Have you got some paper? |
| Our house has seven rooms. | **room** | Is there room for me to sit here? |
| We had a great time at the party. | **time** | Have you got time for a coffee? |
| Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's greatest works. | **work** | I have no money. I need work! |

---taken from:  http://www.englishclub.com/learn-english.htm

## Possessive Nouns

Possession can be shown by using an *of phrase*: The father of the boy, for example. But the usual way to show possession (the boy's father) is by adding [-'s] at the end for singular or simply [-'] after the –s for plural or a noun that already ends in an –s. The singular or plural nature of the possessive is determined by the noun itself.

## Singular Possessive

That boy's father is moving to Dubai next month.
That boy's brothers are moving to Dubai next month.

If a name already ends in an –s, we can add the apostrophe and add another –s or use the apostrophe alone – without adding another –s.

Charles' father is coming for a visit.
Charles's father is coming for a visit.

## Plural Possessive

The boys' father will send them to visit their grandparents in Buraidah.

With a noun that already ends in an –s to indicate the plural, we only add the apostrophe.

Those boys' parents are moving to Dubai next month.

Irregular plural nouns use the [-'s] ending to show possession.

The children's toys are all over the floor.

# 3. PRONOUNS

A pronoun is a word that can be used in place of a noun. By using pronouns, we don't have to constantly repeat the noun again and again. Pronouns are among the few words in English that display "case" according to their function in the sentence. Their function can be:

- as subject
- as object
- to show possession of something

The following table shows the different forms for personal pronouns:

| person/count | subject | object | possessive | reflexive |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st singular | *I* | *me* | *mine* | *myself* |
| 2nd singular | *you* | *you* | *yours* | *yourself* |
| 3rd singular | *he*<br>*she*<br>*it* | *him*<br>*her*<br>*it* | *his*<br>*hers*<br>*its* | *himself*<br>*herself*<br>*itself* |
| 1st plural | *we* | *us* | *ours* | *ourselves* |
| 2nd plural | *you* | *you* | *yours* | *yourselves* |
| 3rd plural | *they* | *them* | *theirs* | *themselves* |

## Possessive pronouns and possessive adjectives

Possessive adjectives are immediately followed by the noun that they modify. Possessive pronouns stand alone, so to speak. They do not modify a noun.

| person/count | subject | object |
|---|---|---|
| 1st singular | *mine* | *my (house)* |
| 2nd singular | *yours* | *your (...)* |
| 3rd singular | *his*<br>*hers* | *his (...)*<br>*her (...)*<br>*its* (...)* |
| 1st plural | *ours* | *our (...)* |
| 2nd plural | *yours* | *your (...)* |
| 3rd plural | *theirs* | *their (...)* |

* Sometimes a possessive adjective and a contraction are so similar that they can cause confusion. Look at this chart:

| possessive adjectives | contractions |
|---|---|
| *its* (belonging to it) | *it's* = it is |
| *your* (belonging to you) | *you're* = you are |
| *their* (belonging to them) | *they're* = they are |
| *whose* (belong to whom) | *who's* = who is |

## Relative / Interrogative Pronouns

These pronouns are used in questions and in adjective clauses.

| subject | object | possessive |
|---|---|---|
| *who* | *whom* | *whose* |
| *whoever* | *whomever* | |
| *which*<br>*that*<br>*what* | *which*<br>*that*<br>*what* | |

### Examples:

**She** likes homework. – subject pronoun
The teacher gave **me** some homework. – object pronoun
This homework is **yours**. – possessive pronoun

1. **Khalid and I** are happy to be here today. (subject, therefore NOT Khalid and me)
2. The books were given to **Khalid and me**. (object, therefore NOT Khalid and I)

Khalid did the homework **himself**. – reflexive pronoun
The cat drank all of **its** milk. – possessive pronoun
The teacher corrected **our** homework. – possessive adjective
**<u>It's</u>** very hot today. – contraction for: **<u>It is</u>** very hot today.
I thanked the woman **who** helped me. – relative pronoun as subject
The people **whom** we visited yesterday are very nice. – relative pronoun as object
The book **that** I read last week was excellent. – relative pronoun as object
**What** is the answer to the question? -- interrogative pronoun as subject

Khalid and I or Khalid and me?

In the first sentence, <u>Khalid and I</u> are **subjects**, so the pronoun ( I ) is in the subjective case to show its function. However, in the second sentence, <u>Khalid and me</u> are **objects**. The pronoun must take the objective case (me) to show its function.

# 4. ADJECTIVES

An adjective is a word that tells us more about a noun, a pronoun or a noun phrase. We can say that adjectives modify or qualify nouns. In our understanding of adjectives, we will include in this summary the definite article, the, and also the indefinite article, a / an, since they limit the noun – either as definite (the) or indefinite (a, an). These always appear at the head of any other words that modify a noun. It is impossible for both the definite article and the indefinite article to modify the same noun.

An adjective can come in front of a noun:

Khalid is an **excellent** student.

Adjectives can follow some verbs, especially the verb BE:

However, his brother is **lazy**.

Words that are not classified as adjectives can act as adjectives:

I broke my **coffee** mug.

(**coffee** = a noun acting as an adjective)

They listen to the **news** broadcast every day.

(**news** = a noun acting as an adjective)

The soup is **steaming** hot.

(**steaming** = present participle acting as an adjective)

**Married** men provide for their families.

(**married** = a past participle acting as an adjective)

# Part II: A Brief Review of English Structure

## Adjective order

Since there can be several adjectives in a row, the usual order of their appearance is as follows:

1. One category of the following ***determiners*** usually come first:

   articles (**a** / **an** [indefinite], or **the** [definite] – never both)

   demonstratives (**this**, **that**…)

   quantifiers (**some**, **any**, **a few**, **many**, **all [of] the**…)

   numbers (**one**, **two**, **three**…)

   the first position for a modifier can be empty

2. Followed by ***adjectives of opinion*:** nice, lovely, beautiful…
3. Followed by ***adjectives of fact***: size, age, shape, color, material, origin.

   That lovely red table weighs a ton.

   That lovely, big, red table weighs a ton.

   That lovely, big, round, red table weighs a ton.

   That lovely, big, new, round, red, marble table weighs a ton.

   That lovely, big, new, round, red, marble Chinese table weighs a ton.

## Comparative Adjectives

When we compare two things to see how they may be different, we use comparative adjectives to describe the differences. Comparative adjectives are used when comparing only 2 things – not 3 or 4 or more. One or both of the 2 things being compared may be a group. The important thing is that comparative adjectives are not used for anything larger than 2, whether individual or group.

The Oxford English Dictionary is **bigger than** any other dictionary.
Dictionaries are usually **thicker than** other books.

The word 'than' usually follows the adjective, but not always.

Venus is **smaller than** the Earth.
Venus is **closer** to the Sun.

There are two possible forms for the comparative adjective:

## Short Adjectives

1-sylllable adjectives as well as 2-syllable adjectives that end in -y simply add an –er.

--If the word already ends in an –e, then only an –r is added.

(late = later)

--If the word ends in a consonant-vowel-consonant, double the last consonant.

(big = bigger)

--If the word ends in –y, change it to –i and then add –er.

(happy = happier)

## Long Adjectives

2-syllable adjectives not ending in –y (**modern, pleasant**) and all adjectives of 3 or more syllables (**expensive, intellectual**) remain unchanged and are preceded by the word **more**. Long adjectives are also normally followed by the word **than**.

I often find a quiet evening at home **more pleasant than** going out.
His shoes are much **more expensive than** mine.

## There are some exceptions that should be noted:

**--With some 2-syllable adjectives, we can use either the short or long adjective forms.**

quiet = quieter than **or** more quiet than
clever = cleverer than **or** more clever than
narrow = narrower than **or** more narrow than
simple = simpler than **or** more simple than

**--A few adjectives have irregular forms that must simply be memorized:**

good = better
well = better (referring to health)
bad = worse
far = farther / further

## Superlative Adjectives

Superlative adjectives express the highest or most extreme degree or quality of 1 thing in a group of 3 or more things. The word **the** precedes the superlative adjective.

Mt. Everest is **the highest** mountain in the world.
China, Russia and India are big countries, but China is **the biggest**.
Khalid is 1.76 m, Ghazi is 1.82 m, and Naif is 1.9 m. Naif is **the tallest**.

Like the comparative, there are two possible forms for the superlative adjective.

### Short Adjectives

1-sylllable adjectives and 2-syllable adjectives that end in –y simply add an –est
--If the word already ends in an –e, then only an –st is added.
(late = the latest)
--If the word ends in a consonant-vowel-consonant, double the last consonant.
(big = the biggest)
--If the word ends in –y, change it to –i and then add –est.
(happy = the happiest)

### Long Adjectives

2-syllable adjectives not ending in –y (**modern, pleasant**) and all adjectives of 3 or more syllables (**expensive, intellectual**) remain unchanged and are preceded by the words the **most**.

Khalid is **the most pleasant** student in the class.
His chemistry book was **the most expensive** book he had to buy

### There are some exceptions that should be noted:

**--With some 2-syllable adjectives, we can use either the short or long adjective forms.**
quiet = the quietest or the most quiet
clever = the cleverest or the most clever
narrow = the narrowest or the most narrow
simple = the simplest or the most simple

**--A few adjectives have irregular forms that must simply be memorized:**
good = the best
bad = the worst
far = the furthest or the farthest

# 5. ADVERBS

An adverb is a word that explains the action or intensity of another word, often a verb.

For example: *The man ran **quickly***.

An adverb can modify an adjective: *Khalid is **really** intelligent*.

An adverb can modify other adverbs: *That artist paints **very well***.

An adverb can also modify an entire sentence: ***Obviously**, he speaks Arabic*.

An adverb can also modify a prepositional phrase: His office is ***immediately** on the left*.

Adverbs are often formed by adding –**ly** to an adjective:

| | |
|---|---|
| slow | slowly |
| quick | quickly |
| interesting | interestingly |
| happy | happily (the -**y** becomes an –**i** before adding the –**ly**) |

However, it is important to remember that not all words ending in –**ly** are adverbs.

1. Words referring to time ending in –**ly** can be adjectives or adverbs:

| | |
|---|---|
| early | monthly |
| hourly | weekly |
| daily | yearly |

2. Some adjectives end in –**ly** and are never adverbs:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| courtly (manners) | elderly (person) | lively (party) |
| cowardly (lion) | friendly (clerk) | lonely (people) |
| deadly (weapons) | heavenly (vision) | lovely (day) |
| earthy (comfort) | leisurely (pace) | worldly (wisdom) |

Some adverbs have no particular form: ***well***, ***fast***, ***very***, ***never***, ***always***, ***often***, ***still***.

Adverbs have three main positions:

Front (before the subject): ***Now** we will study English*.

Middle (between the subject and the main verb): *He **seldom** takes a nap*.

End (after the verb or object): *We should study adverbs **carefully***.

## Frequency Adverbs

Adverbs of frequency answer the question, "How often?" or "How frequently?" The most common adverbs of frequency are: **usually**, **frequently**, **often**, **sometimes**, **occasionally**, **rarely**, **seldom**, **never**.

Adverbs of frequency come before the main verb:

> *We **sometimes** go shopping on Thursdays.*
> *He **seldom** eats at home.*
> *She **never** goes out alone.*

However, adverbs of frequency come after the verb BE as a main verb:

> *They are **usually** at home in the evening.*
> *She is **never** at home.*
> *We are **usually** together.*

*Occasionally, sometimes, often, frequently* and *usually* can also go at the beginning or end of a sentence:

> *We go shopping on Monday **sometimes**.*
> ***Usually** they are at home in the evening.*

## Conjunctive Adverbs

*Conjunctive adverbs serve as connectors and function like conjunctions. Here is a partial list of such words or phrases:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| also | accordingly | in conclusion |
| furthermore | consequently | in contrast |
| however | eventually | in other words |
| moreover | particularly | on the other hand |
| nevertheless | previously | |
| therefore | similarly | |
| | specifically | |
| | unfortunatley | |

Please look in the section on CONJUNCTIONS (page 68) for further explanation.

# 6. PREPOSITIONS

A preposition is a word that governs or rules a noun and expresses a relationship or link to another word or element in the sentence.

There is one simple rule about prepositions that has no exceptions: a preposition is always followed by a noun, never by a verb. By noun, the following are included:

--pronouns (him, her, they, she, us, mine)
--proper nouns (Khalid, Sarah, Riyadh, Oman)
--noun groups or noun phrases (my older brother, the English class, his new car)
--gerunds (swimming, eating, studying)
Please note that gerunds are in fact the present participle form of verbs (the –ing form) acting as nouns.

Of special note: '**To**' is a very common preposition. '**To**' is also part of the complete infinitive of a verb (**to** eat, **to** study, **to** run, **to** walk). When '**to**' is used in an infinitive, it IS NOT a preposition.

He wants to live in London.
He went to London last summer.

In the first sentence, *to live* is an infinitive, so '**to**' in that sentence IS NOT a preposition. In the second sentence, '**to**' IS a preposition – it is followed by a noun.

There are around 150 prepositions in English. The following are some of the most common or most frequent:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| about | beyond | outside |
| above | by | over |
| across | despite | plus |
| after | down | round |
| against | during | since |
| along | except | than |
| among | for | through |
| around | from | to |
| as | in | toward |
| at | inside | towards |
| before | into | under |
| behind | near | underneath |
| below | of | until |
| beneath | off | up |
| beside | on | upon |
| besides | onto | with |
| between | opposite | within |

| POINT<br>exact / at one of many... | ENCLOSED SPACE<br>exact / in one of many... | SURFACE<br>exact / on one of many... | |
|---|---|---|---|
| at the / a corner | in the / a garden | on the wall | on a wall |
| at the / a bus stop | in Cairo | on the ceiling | on a ceiling |
| at the / a door | in Yemen | on the door | on a door |
| at the top of the / a page | in the / a box | on the cover | on a cover |
| at the end of the / a road | in my / the / a pocket | on the floor | on a floor |
| at the / an entrance | in my / the / a wallet | on the carpet | on a carpet |
| at the / a crossroads | in the / a building | on the menu | on a menu |
| at the / an intersection | in the / a car | on the street<br>on the island | on a street<br>on an island |

## Prepositions of Place: at, in, on

In general, as seen in the chart above, we use:

**at** if we are referring to a POINT
**in** if we are referring to an ENCLOSED SPACE
**on** if we are referring to a SURFACE.

Look at these examples:

- Khalid is waiting for you **at** the bus stop.
- The shop is **at** the end of the street.
- My plane stopped **at** Dubai and arrived **in** London two hours late.
- When will you arrive **at** the office?
- Do you work **in** an office?
- I have a meeting **in** Sharjah.
- Do you live **in** Japan?
- Jupiter is **in** the Solar System.
- The author's name is **on** the cover of the book.
- There are no prices **on** this menu.
- You are standing **on** my foot.
- There was a "no smoking" sign **on** the wall.
- I live **on** the 7th floor **at** 21 Oxford Street **in** London.

Some prepositions are used in ways that may seem strange. Notice the use of the prepositions of place **at**, **in** and **on** in these standard expressions:

| at | in | on |
|---|---|---|
| at home | in a car | on a bus |
| at work | in a taxi | on a train |
| at school | in a helicopter | on a plane |
| at KSU | in a boat | on a ship |
| at college | in an elevator | on a bicycle, on a motorbike |
| at the top | in the newspaper | on a horse, on an elephant |
| at the bottom | in the sky | on the radio, on television |
| at the side | in a row | on the left, on the right |

## Prepositions of Time: in, on, at

We use:

**at** for PRECISE TIME (CLOCK TIME)
**in** for PERIODS OF TIME (DURATION)
**on** for DAYS and DATES

| PRECISE TIME | PERIODS OF TIME (DURATION) | DAYS AND DATES |
|---|---|---|
| at 3 o'clock | in May | on Sunday |
| at 10:30 am | in summer | on Tuesdays |
| at noon | in the summer | on July 6th |
| at dinnertime | in 1990 | on October 6, 2010 |
| at bedtime | in the 1990s | on Eid Day |
| at sunrise | in the next century | on National Day |
| at sunset | in the Abbasid Period | on my birthday |
| at the moment | in the past/future | on New Year's Eve |

Look at these examples:

- I have a meeting **at** 9 am.
- The shop closes **at** midnight.
- Khalid went home **at** lunchtime.
- In England, it often snows **in** December.
- Do you think we will go to Jupiter **in** the future?
- There should be a lot of progress **in** the next century.
- Do you work **on** Mondays?
- Her birthday is **on the 20th of November**. (...or **on** November 20th.)

Notice the use of the prepositions of time ( **in** and **on** ) in these common expressions:

| in | on |
|---|---|
| in the morning | on Tuesday morning |
| in the mornings | on Saturday mornings |
| in the afternoon(s) | on Sunday afternoon(s) |
| in the evening(s) | on Monday evening(s) |

## 7. CONJUNCTIONS

Conjunctions are joining words (sometimes called linking words) that bring together two parts of a sentence or groups of words within a sentence. There are 2 kinds of conjunctions: coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions as well as conjunctive adverbs which also serve as connectors.

### Coordinating Conjunctions: and, or, nor, for, so, yet, but

The 7 coordinating conjunctions join two parts of a sentence that are grammatically equal or similar . They can join words within a sentence or they can join two parts of a sentence. They always come between the two words or groups of words that they join.

A coordinating conjunction joins together words, phrases or clauses that are similar in structure.

*Khalid* ***and*** *Muhammad are at school right now.*
*They usually play football after school,* ***but*** *today they plan to go swimming.*

When a coordinating conjunction joins two clauses, each of those clauses is independent. In other words, if the coordinating conjunction is removed, there will be 2 complete sentences.

They usually play football after school, but today they plan to go swimming.

*They usually play football after school.*

*Today they plan to go swimming.*

It is always correct to place a comma before a coordinating conjunction that joins 2 independent clauses.

However, if the 2 clauses are short, it is OK to leave out the comma.

*For example:*

*She is kind, so she helps people.* (with a comma)

*or*

*She is kind so she helps people.* (without a comma)

When the last thing in a list of 3 or more things is joined to that list by **and**, the comma should be used between each item in the list. It is OK to use the comma before **and**, but if you want to leave it out, that is OK too.

*Nasser loves to play football, baseball, tennis, and volleyball.* (comma before and)

*or*

*Nasser loves to play football, baseball, tennis and volleyball.* (no comma before and)

## Subordinating Conjunctions

A subordinating conjunction joins a dependent clause to an independent clause. The independent clause is then thought of as the main clause in that sentence. That means it could stand alone as a complete sentence. The subordinate clause or dependent clause cannot stand alone as a sentence as long as the subordinate clause is with it.

*Khalid stayed home from school* **since** *he was sick.*
*Khalid stayed home from school. ( a complete sentence – the main clause)*
*Since he was sick. (NOT a complete sentence – the dependent clause)*
*He was sick. (a complete sentence if* **since** *is removed)*

There are a lot of subordinating conjunctions. Some of the most common ones are: **after**, **although**, **as**, **because**, **before**, **how**, **if**, **once**, **since**, **than**, **that**, **though**, **till**, **until**, **when**, **where**, **whether**, **while.**

A subordinating conjunction always comes at the beginning of the dependent clause:

*Khalid stayed home from school* **since** *he was sick.*

However, the dependent clause can also come before the main clause:

**Since** *he was sick, Khalid stayed home from school.*

As you can see, when the dependent clause comes first, a comma stands at the end of that clause. If the dependent clause follows the main clause then only a full stop at the end of the sentence is needed.

## Conjunctive Adverbs

Conjunctive adverbs serve as connectors and function like conjunctions. Here is a partial list of such words or phrases:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| accordingly | in conclusion | particularly |
| also | in contrast | previously |
| consequently | in other words | similarly |
| eventually | moreover | specifically |
| furthermore | nevertheless | therefore |
| however | on the other hand | unfortunately |

Conjunctive adverbs indicate a close relationship between main clauses, but they cannot join main clauses in the way that coordinating conjunctions can. The clause which is introduced by a conjunctive adverb is usually preceded by a semi-colon. If the conjunctive adverb is a long word (more than 4 letters), it is usually followed by a comma.

In the examples below, the first sentence of each pair uses a coordinating conjunction. The second sentence of each pair, however, uses a conjunctive adverb:

*Mariam thought she had lost her mobile, but she found it in her apartment.*
*Mariam thought she had lost her mobile; however, she found it in her apartment.*

*He loves his work, so he is eager to go to his office every morning.*
*He loves his work; therefore, he is eager to go to his office every morning*

Conjunctive adverbs are not always at the beginning of the clause they belong to; when they are in the middle or at the end, they are set off by commas:

*Khalid won't be able to arrive on time; Nasser will, however, be on schedule.*
*Khalid won't be able to arrive on time; Nasser will be on schedule, however.*

Some conjoined sentences with identical elements in the verb phrase can use the conjunctions **too** or **so** to join them.

## TOO / EITHER – SO / NEITHER: Conjoined Sentences

A conjoined sentence is a sentence that has two statements that have different subjects but the same verb. The two statements are joined together and the 2nd verb reduced to the use of a helping verb instead of repeating the 1st verb again. Other information in the sentence that is identical does not need to be repeated. Look at the examples:

Using TOO when the statements are affirmative:

| conjunction | subject | verb | prepositional phrase | TOO |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <br>*and* | *Khalid*<br>*I* | *is studying*<br>*am* | *in the library*<br>*...* | <br>*too.* |

Using EITHER when the statements are negative:

| conjunction | subject | verb | object | EITHER |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <br>*and* | *Khalid*<br>*I* | *didn't finish*<br>*didn't* | *his homework*<br>*...* | <br>*either.* |

Use DO when the original verb is simple present:

| conjunction | subject | verb | prepositional phrase | TOO |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <br>*and* | *Khalid*<br>*I* | *studies*<br>*do* | *at KSU*<br>*...* | <br>*too.* |

Use DID when the original verb is simple past:

| conjunction | subject | verb | prepositional phrase | TOO |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <br>*and* | *Khalid*<br>*I* | *finished*<br>*did* | *his homework*<br>*...* | <br>*too.* |

More examples:

- China is in the Far east and **Japan is too**.
- Nasser has been thinking about going to Paris and **I have too**.
- Muhammad would never even think about being rude to his mother and **I wouldn't either**
- Samir isn't thinking at all about what he'll do this summer and **his friends aren't either**.
- Yasir is hungry and **I am too**.
- Zaid  doesn't drink coffee late at night and **they don't either**.

If the words SO (for positive statements) and NEITHER (for negative statements) are used in conjoined sentences, they follow immediately after the conjunction and the word order of the 2nd clause is inverted.

| subject | verb | other word(s) | Conjunction with so (+), neither (-) | verb | subject |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Khalid* | *is* | *hungry* | *and so* | *am* | *I.* |
| *Khalid* | *didn't work* | *very hard* | *and neither* | *did* | *I.* |

More examples:

- China is in the Far East and **so is Japan**.
- Nasser has been thinking about going to Paris and **so have I**.
- Muhammad would never even think about being rude to his mother and **neither would I**.
- Samir isn't thinking at all about what he'll do this summer and **neither are his friends**.
- Yasir is hungry and **so am I**.
- Zaid shouldn't drink coffee late at night and **neither should they**.

## 8. INTERJECTIONS

Interjections are short exclamations that have no real grammatical value. They are used more in spoken English but are also found in written English. Often they are not actually real words  but rather 'hesitation devices' like:

**uh, er, uh-huh, hmmm, ah, and oh.**

Some actual words serve as interjections:

**well, really, honest, of course, ouch.**

Often they are expressions of surprise or disappointment or the feeling of a sudden strong emotion.  In such cases, they may well be set off by themselves with an exclamation mark.  If they are incorporated into a sentence, they are usually set apart by commas.  The important thing is to recognize them as outside the normal boundaries of grammar.

Examples:

He said that the moon is made of green cheese. **Really**! Does he think I believe that?

If he thinks I believe the moon is made of green cheese, **well**, he is sorely mistaken!

But teacher, I didn't have time to finish the homework. **Honest**!

But teacher, **honest**, I didn't have time to finish the homework.

## PUNCTUATION

There are 7 basic symbols used in English to show the separation of sentences or parts of sentences and to make their meaning clear:

. , ; : ' ! ?

### FULL STOP OR PERIOD … … … … … … … … … … …

The main use of the full stop or period is to indicate that a sentence is finished. A sentence must have both a subject and a verb and express a complete idea.

### COMMA ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,, ,,,

1. Within a sentence, the comma is used to separate a dependent clause that comes in front of a main clause.

   *Since he was not feeling well, Khalid stayed home all last week.*

   If the dependent clause comes after the main clause, a comma is not used.

   *Khalid stayed home all last week since he was not feeling well.*

2. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction that joins two independent clauses.

   *She was late for the exam, but she finished before all the other students.*

3. A comma is used to separate three or more items in a list. The comma before the **and** for the last item is optional. A comma is also used to separate three or more adjectives or adverbs.

   *I bought some coffee, sugar, bananas, <u>apples, and pears</u> at the market.*
   *I bought some coffee, sugar, bananas, <u>apples and pears</u> at the market.*
   *He loves the old, brown, woolen shirt his mother made for him long ago.*
   *She always writes quickly, concisely and accurately.*

4. Adverbs used as sentence modifiers are set off by one or two commas, depending on their placement in the sentence.

   *Fortunately, he had prepared well for the items covered by the exam.*
   *He had prepared well, fortunately, for the items covered by the exam.*

5. CAUTION: Do not use a comma to separate two sentences.

   *Khalid likes to play football, Muhammad prefers to play volleyball. (wrong)*
   *Khalid likes to play football. Muhammad prefers to play volleyball. (OK)*

## SEMI-COLON ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;; ;;;

The semi-colon can be used to separate sentences that are grammatically independent but closely linked to one another regarding subject matter or meaning.

*Khalid likes English; it is his favorite subject.*

## COLON ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: ::: :::

The colon expands on the sentence that precedes it either with a list or with words of explanation. The sentence that comes before the colon must be grammatically complete.

*There are many reasons for poor written communication: lack of planning, poor grammar, misuse of punctuation marks and insufficient vocabulary.*

*Some writers have difficulty understanding punctuation rules: they think the examples are not clear.*

## APOSTROPHE ''' ''' ''' ''' ''' ''' ''' ''' ''' ''' ''' ''' '''

The apostrophe is used to indicate possession:

*My friend's father just bought a beautiful new car.*

It is also used in contractions: *can't, don't, wouldn't* .

## QUESTION MARK ??? ??? ??? ??? ??? ??? ??? ??? ???

The question mark is used as the end punctuation for a question.

*How happy do you think they are?*

*He's a student in our college, isn't he?*

There is no need for a question mark in a sentence where the question clause is embedded.

*The doctor asked me where I was feeling pain.*

*I'll ask my friend when the next plane is supposed to land.*

## EXCLAMATION MARK !!! !!! !!! !!! !!! !!! !!! !!! !!! !!! !!!

An exclamation mark is used as end punctuation after a statement that expresses strong emotion or feelings. If the statement were spoken, it would be uttered in a raised voice.

*Don't let me ever hear you say something like that again!*

*Ouch! That hurt!*

*Wow!*

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http://grammar.uoregon.edu/toc.html (homepage for a course in English)

## FREE ENGLISH STUDY SITES

Explore these sites to see how they may be of benefit to you.

1. http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/subjects/english.shtml
2. http://www.bellenglish.com/
3. http://www.english-at-home.com/
4. http://www.englishclub.com/learn-english.htm
5. http://www.englishspace.ort.org/
6. http://www.eflnet.com/?gclid=CO_pkOerjJMCFRKH1QodAC8tfA
7. http://www.eslcafe.com
8. http://www.eslgo.com/
9. http://www.eslgo.com/classes.html
10. http://www.esl-lab.com (especially for listening practice)
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16. http://www.voanews.com/learningenglish/home/

### HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

http://www.edufind.com/english/grammar

**The web links included in the references and the study aids were accurate at the time this material was gathered, but in some cases may no longer be accessible.

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